1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

The wilderness was his motherland, rich, beautiful, most dear, for he had never known cities.

Before we started homeward, Faris tore up bunches of grass by the roots; each one of us had to take back an armful to testify to the fertility of the land we had explored.

When we reached camp we found hundreds of men seated before the threshold of Tra'd ibn Sattam's tent, waiting for our tidings about the land in the North. Slaves brought up dry brushwood and herbage and piled it on the slumbering fire. Soon the flames were crackling, leaping as high as the roof, and the inside of the black tent was one red glow.

We spread out our silent witnesses—the bunches of grass, herbage and flowers, which were no less precious for being withered. All night long the people came, even from the most distant camping-places, to see and touch them. They fingered the long grasses with exclamations of joy and praise to God. Now and then Tra'd ibn Sattam handed out a blade, which passed from hand to hand, and some would lift it to their lips with a murmur of "*Ya hayat*—O Life!" And each time Ibn Sattam proffered one of these precious specimens from the grazing grounds of the enemy, he would say: "Here are the proofs of Life. Tell your children that we shall go on." And the tribesmen vaulted on to their horses and galloped into the night, to show the emblems of hope to their women and children and neighbours, and to tell them of the wonders of the highland pasture.

The evening of the following day I sat talking with some Rwala by the fire in the principal tent, with others

576 "May Allâh grant success to thee! *allâh je'âfik.*"
609 "How is thy health? *čejf ḥâlak.*"
484 "May Allâh preserve thy health! *allâh jesallem ḥâlak.*"
"How are thy little sons? *čejf 'ejâlak.*"

"They are well. May Allâh grant success to thee and preserve all that thou lovest! *bel-'âfi allâh je'âfik w-jesallem rjâlik.*"

The ordinary part of a salutation being exhausted by the foregoing, more particular questions, which are of great importance in the desert, may be asked:

"Whither bound? *wên ent.*" "Where dost thou come from? *min ên ǧît.*" "From where dost thou bless us? *min ên ḥajjît.*" "Tell us some news of the territory thou hast crossed, *'allemna b'ulûmaha.*" "Give us the reports! *hât al-'ulûm.*"

● [203] It takes some-time to tell of the raids undertaken and the booty obtained, of pastures, watering places, etc., as these accounts, *'ulûm*, in the desert take the place of newspapers and the welfare of the traveler or even of the whole clan often depends on them. If both the saluting men are riding on camels, they halt and, letting their animals graze at will, press their crossed hands against the front saddle knob, sink their heads, converse, and listen. If on foot, they squat on their heels, support themselves by their staves, and talk. At last one of them puts the question:

"Thou didst not mention to us thy last hosts, *mâ ḏakart lena al-ma'âzîb.*"

"They camp at such and such a place. Ye may be there before evening, *terawwehûnahom.*" "They camp not far from your face," or "on your right (or left) hand."

If the travelers ride close by a camp, there is always someone there who goes out to stop them and learn what they know, so that he can relate it in the chief's tent to the [574] others. A traveling Bedouin will hardly ever conceal the position of his late hosts' camp, but women gathering dry fuel or hay almost always keep the whereabouts of their own camp secret and try to direct the traveler to some other camp. They fear lest the unknown man be a spy of the enemy or a robber, and, even if he is not, they do not care for a guest, who naturally adds to their work. At the same time the inquisitiveness of their sex and the desire to bring news home with them, impels them to call the traveler back on the pretext of pointing out the road better. The rider sits in his

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

Verse 1. *Bejt* means the whole verse, *ḳâf* its second half and then, specifically, the rhyme of this second half. 3. *Śenâḥ* is a man of morose disposition, who will neither talk nor smile. 4. *ʿElem* signifies a report circulating in regard to a man. If such a report is consistent it is considered unshakable. A good report must be that, otherwise a man would fall in the public esteem. 5. *Melwâḥ* is the decoy swung by a falconer when trying to lure a falcon towards him, *lawwaḥ ʿala-ṭ-ṭejr*. When a man breaks off a twig of the luxuriant *rûṭe* and shows it to a riding camel, he coaxes her to come near, *lawwaḥ ʿala-d-ḏelûl*. There are people whose actions lure evil into the tribe, regardless of the fact that their fellow tribesmen are already suffering. 7. *Menhaǧ* is a path or trail. 12. The women will reveal your secret plan, and you will then be unable to realize it. *Sadd* means, in particular, the planning of a great raid against a certain enemy. The men taking part in it do not themselves know accurately either the time of their departure or the enemy they are to attack. Should the commander's wife learn of it she would undoubtedly tell it to some of her friends, and the enemy would receive warning even before the raiders started. 18. When you have a good friend, share your last drop of water with him. Do not confound words with deeds. *Al-ʿajn* means both a spring and an eye. *ʿEdd* is the name of a well with spring water which never dries up. 22. Violence, force, often leads to peace sooner than mildness. 28. *Ḥaẓẓ* signifies a passionate desire for something. Out of a youth filled with such a strenuous desire an exemplary being can be formed by a man of good sense. 25. *Nijje* is a plan, intention, desire, which robs a man of sleep, drives him to undertake night marches, and lights him on his way. 26. *Enṛaṭar* is said of a man who likes to eat well and to amuse himself with women. 28. The appeased man has not laid aside his saber; he has only dropped its point and could, if angered again, strike at him who had just appeased him.

1. *ʿEndi fetâwi lil-faḥîm al-fâhem*
   jarmi bḳalb al-ṛâfelîn aḥča'
2. *al-ʿafen low taʿṭîh mâl ḥešet killeh*
   mâ jaškor faẓlak w-lâ jarodd ḫana'
3. *ḥelw elja' ǧûk maʿtâz ḥâǧa*
   w-ʿafen elja' laḳḳa-l-ʿamîl ḳafa'

539* 726* Rašîd, who calls his camel herds Nûra — whence his battle cry *"an-aḫu nûra*, I am the brother of Nûra" — organized a great raid against Eben Ša'lân under the command of Eben Ḥaǧǧâǧ, who succeeded in surprising some clans subject to Eben Ša'lân and in completely robbing them. The news of this disaster was carried by A'îd, a negro, who, borrowing a horse, rode in all haste to report it in all the camps. Our poet, Fahad eben Ṣbejḥ, was greatly affected by the news brought by A'îd, to whom he had lent his horse, yet he soon learned that the raiders had been at once pursued by Eben Ša'lân, overtaken by him at Ḥabra Rmejḥ at the beginning of the al-Ḫerr valley, and that, besides recapturing all the herds from them, Eben Ša'lân had also killed their commander, Eben Ḥaǧǧâǧ, with his sons. Fahad therefore urges A'îd to spread this true account so as to give Eben Ša'lân the credit due to him.

Verse 1. *Al-'arač* is a poetical expression for a worn leather saddle. 2. *Hamlân* is a jester, a laugher, or babbler. *Ṣamâjel* means well-founded reports; *ṣâmel al-kilme*, the truth. A market place, *sûḳ*, is frequented by people from all sides who receive and spread news. 3. *Barâṛît* are desolate waterless regions. The negro Ḥmâr thought the proper spelling of the word was *barârîd*, meaning men armed with rifles. 4. *Ḥabra* is a shallow but often very extensive depression in a vast plain where the rain water remains for a long time. Ḥabra Rmejḥ lies near the beginning of the valley of al-Ḫerr. 5. *Menṣab* is a poetical expression for the lesser chiefs or their relatives. *Râseh 'an al-maten mâjel*, he received a saber stroke in his throat, which was not cut through completely, so that the head remained hanging by the skin of the throat and then fell on the small of his back, *maten*, from which it rolled to one side, *mâjel*. *Rwâǧîd* are handfuls of cut grain laid crosswise.

● [203]

Wars Between the Rwala and the Beni Wahab (1850—1864)

The Rwala were wont to encamp for a few weeks every year in the fertile an-Nuḳra territory on the west slope of the Ḥawrân in order to supply themselves with all they needed during their ten months stay in the desert. But their encamping was resisted by the Beni Wahab, led by Eben Smejr, head chief of the Weld 'Ali. Long wars followed. The head chief, Muḥammad eben Smejr, succeeded also in winning to his side some